



**PRESIDENT BUSH'S  
COMPETITIVENESS AGENDA:  
ROBBING PETER TO PAY PAUL**

**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE HONORABLE GEORGE MILLER,  
SENIOR DEMOCRATIC MEMBER  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE**

---

**February 2006**

---

## **Executive Summary**

After pressure from American businesses and educators – and from Democrats – President Bush has finally outlined a global competitiveness initiative. Unfortunately, while the President’s proposal takes some encouraging first steps, it does not live up to his State of the Union promise to keep America competitive.

Even worse, the President’s budget actually cuts critical education programs that successfully improve math and science achievement through the use of technology, boost the college participation and graduation rates among low-income and first generation students, and ensure that high-risk students stay in school and earn high school diplomas. The Bush budget also eliminates training programs for adults and youth that have a successful track record, and a history of strong public/private partnerships to create unaccountable and un-tested “Career Advancement Accounts.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Bush Eliminates Critical Education Programs to Pay for Math and Science Proposals**

President Bush’s budget eliminates over a \$1 billion dollars from critical programs that improve math and science achievement, boost college participation and graduation rates among low-income and first generation students, and ensure that high risk students stay in school and earn high school diplomas in order to pay for his \$380 million math and science proposals. President Bush’s fiscal year 2007 budget eliminates: GEAR UP; TRIO Upward Bound Math and Science, TRIO Upward Bound, TRIO Talent Search programs; Education Technology State Grants; and, the Dropout Prevention program.

### **Much of Bush’s Math and Science Proposals are Retreads of Existing Programs**

While the Bush budget trumpets a “new” proposal of \$380 million to improve math and science instruction, \$115 million of this proposal is simply an insufficient increase in existing programs, including Advanced Placement teacher training and the Adjunct Teacher Corps.

### **Bush Eliminates Landmark Job Training Programs**

At a time when millions of Americans are unemployed or looking to upgrade their workplace skills, the President is proposing to eliminate a number of landmark job training programs and convert them into a privatized and untested voucher program.

## **Democratic Innovation Agenda Would Boost Top Quality Education Opportunities and Keep America #1**

In contrast, last year Democrats offered an innovation agenda to boost top quality educational opportunities—both K-12 and college—that does not cut critical education or job training programs. In addition, the Democratic Innovation Agenda significantly boosts the education investment to ensure that every classroom has a highly qualified math and science teacher.

The Democratic Innovation Agenda would create an educated skilled workforce in the vital areas of science, math, engineering, and information technology by:

- Educating 100,000 new scientists, engineers and mathematicians in the next four years. Placing a highly qualified teacher in every math and science K-12 classroom by offering up front tuition assistance to talented undergraduates and by paying competitive salaries to established teachers working in the fields of math and science.
- Making college tuition tax-deductible for students studying math, science, technology or engineering.

---

<sup>1</sup> These include the Adult Employment and Training Activities, Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities, and Youth Activities of the Workforce Investment Act.

## **President Bush's Competitiveness Agenda: Robbing Peter to Pay Paul**

This report focuses on the parts of the President's American Competitiveness Initiative that, if enacted, would be implemented by either the Department of Education or the Department of Labor. This analysis finds that, in almost every case, the President finances proposals in his competitiveness agenda by eliminating or cutting funding for critical education and job training programs. Democrats welcome the President's focus on competitiveness, but the fact is that simply moving funds around does not represent the kind of bold thinking and aggressive investment that America needs in order to remain number one.

### **Bush Eliminates Critical Education Programs to Pay for Math and Science Proposals**

In order to finance its \$380 million math and science proposals, the Bush Administration proposes to eliminate over \$1 billion dollars from critical programs that: improve math and science achievement by helping to close the digital divide; boost college participation and graduation rates among high risk students – including through rigorous college math and science prep classes; and ensure that high risk students stay in school and earn high school diplomas. President Bush's budget eliminates the following critical programs:

- The **Education Technology State Grants** program was eliminated even though it is the main source of federal funding for school technology. This program is successfully helping improve math and science achievement through the use of technology and is indispensable helping poor urban and rural districts close the digital divide.
- **TRIO Upward Bound Math and Science, TRIO Upward Bound and TRIO Talent Search** were eliminated in the Bush budget despite the fact that students participating in Upward Bound are four times more likely to earn an undergraduate degree than those students from similar backgrounds who do not participate in the program. In 2006, more than 400,000 low-income, high risk and first generation college students participated in the Upward Bound and Talent Search programs.

As a result of the Bush cuts more than 450,000 low-income, high risk students will be denied critical services to boost college participation and improve math and science skills.

- The **Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduates (GEAR UP) program** was eliminated even though it has a proven track record of enabling more schools to offer rigorous college prep coursework that is crucial to students enrolling in, and graduating from, college. In 2006, more than 700,000 low-income students took part in GEAR UP.
- The **Dropout Prevention program** was eliminated in President Bush's budget despite the fact that the program helps keep children in school at a time when only 68 out of every 100 students who enter high school will graduate. Among low-income and minority students the dropout rate is even higher.

The elimination of Education Technology State Grants, TRIO Upward Bound Math and Science, GEAR UP, TRIO Upward Bound, TRIO Talent Search and the Dropout Prevention programs total nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars in cuts to critical programs that are specifically designed to assist at-risk high school students.

## **Much of Bush's Math and Science Proposals are Retreads of Existing Programs**

While the Bush budget trumpets a “new” proposal of \$380 million to improve math and science instruction, \$115 million of this proposal is simply an insufficient increase in existing programs, including:

- A \$90 million increase for Advanced Placement (AP) for teacher training and to increase the number of students who take AP and International Baccalaureate courses in math, science and languages<sup>1</sup>. This proposal requires schools, even impoverished schools, to match federal funding in order to receive assistance.
- \$25 million for the Adjunct Teacher Corps to encourage professionals with relevant expertise to teach secondary school courses in math, science, and other core academic subjects. While the Bush Budget touts this as a new initiative, it is already authorized by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) under Title V (part D, Subpart 1).

The remaining funds in President Bush's math and science proposal include:

- \$125 million for the Math Now for elementary schools to implement proven practices in math including those recommended by the National Math Panel.
- \$125 million for new Math Now for middle schools.
- \$10 million for a Math Panel to identify key math content and instructional practices.
- \$5 million for evaluation – focusing on whether or not evaluations of math and science programs in elementary and secondary schools are consistent with NCLB.

While these proposals are a good first step towards boosting proficiency in math and science, they fall short of the President's promise to keep America competitive in the global economy.

In addition, the fiscal year 2007 Bush budget includes the creation of a math and science grant program—which was included in the Raid on Student Aid budget cutting bill—that would provide additional funds to less than 3% of all Pell eligible students who are:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year Pell Grant recipients who are majoring in science, math, technology, engineering or a high priority foreign language and who have a cumulative GPAs of at least 3.0 in their major will receive a grant of \$4,000 (SMART Grants).

Bush's fiscal year 2007 budget also proposes an academic competitiveness grant program, which would provide first and second year Pell recipients who have completed a 'rigorous' secondary school program recognized by the Department of Education. First year recipients will receive a \$750 grant and sophomores will receive a \$1,300. Both grant programs are paid for with funds cut from the federal student loan programs.

## **Bush Eliminates Landmark Job Training Programs**

At a time when millions of Americans are unemployed or looking to upgrade their workplace skills, the President is proposing to eliminate a number of landmark job training programs and convert them into a privatized voucher program. Specifically, the Bush budget eliminates \$695

---

<sup>1</sup> Funds 70,000 new AP/IB math and science teachers and 700,000 additional students passing AP/IB exams over 5 years.

million from training programs for adults and youth that have a successful track record, and a history of strong public/private partnerships (including Job Corps and the dislocated worker program) to create unaccountable and un-tested “Career Advancement Accounts.”<sup>2</sup>

The hallmark of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) is local flexibility, and strong ties to local employers with accountability for results. The Administration proposal cuts cities and counties out of decision making about how to put their residents to work. Despite repeated efforts by the Bush Administration to torpedo the WIA, Congress has repeatedly rejected its proposals. Today’s business and labor leaders are calling for greater federal investment in the WIA – investments to build a skilled workforce in the vital areas of science, math, engineering, manufacturing, and information technology.

In addition, the President’s budget again proposes to eliminate funding for job training for migrant and seasonal agricultural workers.

## **Democratic Innovation Agenda Would Boost Top Quality Education Opportunities and Keep America #1**

In contrast, Democrats have offered an Innovation Agenda to boost top quality educational opportunities—both K-12 and college—that do not cut critical education or job training programs. In addition, the Democratic Innovation Agenda significantly boosts the education investment to ensure that every classroom has a highly qualified math and science teacher.

The Democratic Innovation Agenda would:

- **Recruit top talent to teach math and science in our schools**, including \$4,000 per year of up-front tuition assistance for outstanding students who commit to teaching math or science in a high-need elementary or secondary school for at least four years.
- **Reward math and science teachers with premium pay**, including providing for pay increases of \$12,500 per year for exemplary math and science teachers with proven track records of success in increasing their students’ academic achievement who transfer into high-poverty elementary and secondary schools for at least four years.
- **Help new math and science teachers build their skills**, including \$300 million for new teacher induction programs that allow new math and science teachers to work closely more experienced exemplary math and science teachers.
- **Make it easier for math and science teachers to transfer into the states and communities that need them most** through the establishment and development of a new, research-based, portable, performance-based teacher assessment tool. Just as attorneys who score well on the bar exam can transfer their credentials if necessary, teachers who score well on teacher exams would benefit in a similar way.
- **Educate 100,000 new scientists, engineers, and mathematicians in the next four years** by proposing a new initiative, working with states, businesses, and universities to provide scholarships to qualified students who commit to working in fields of innovation.

---

<sup>2</sup> These include the Adult Employment and Training Activities, Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities, and Youth Activities of the Workforce Investment Act)

- **Make college tuition tax-deductible for students studying math, science, technology and engineering.**
- **Double overall funding** (over 5 years) **for the National Science Foundation (NSF)**, basic research in the physical sciences across all agencies and collaborative research partnerships, providing 2.3 billion more than the President's fiscal year 2007 budget. Unlike President Bush's proposal, the Innovation Agenda does not cut other science and technology research to pay for the increase to NSF.
- **Create a special visa for the best and brightest international doctoral and post-doctoral scholars in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.**
- **Modernize and permanently extend a globally competitive R&D tax credit** to increase domestic investment, create more U.S. jobs, and allow companies to pursue long term projects with certainty that the credit will not expire.
- **Implement a national broadband policy that doubles the federal funding to promote broadband for all Americans**, especially in rural and underserved communities; create new avenues of Internet access including wireless broadband technologies, broadband over power lines, and affordable community based-options.